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URBAN DISTRICT OF CONSETT.

Interim Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Year  
1944.

To the Chairman and Members of the Consett Urban District Council:-

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

In presenting what is probably the last of these interim reports, that for the year 1944, I am pleased to record another excellent year as far as the statistics we deal with are concerned. New low records are reported for the Zymotic Deathrate, the Infant Mortality Rate and the Diphtheria Mortality figures.

The cessation of Civil Defence Work in June 1945, and now the termination of hostilities will permit full concentration on the ever increasing volume of Public Health Work.

Consett Urban District Council have always been active in their support of such work and will, no doubt, play their part in any new duties that may be placed upon them for the welfare of the public.

Let us turn with hope to our part in building a "Better Britain", not only in terms of homes, but in all the moral values needed in human relationships and thus in some measure help to make worth while the sacrifices of the last six years.

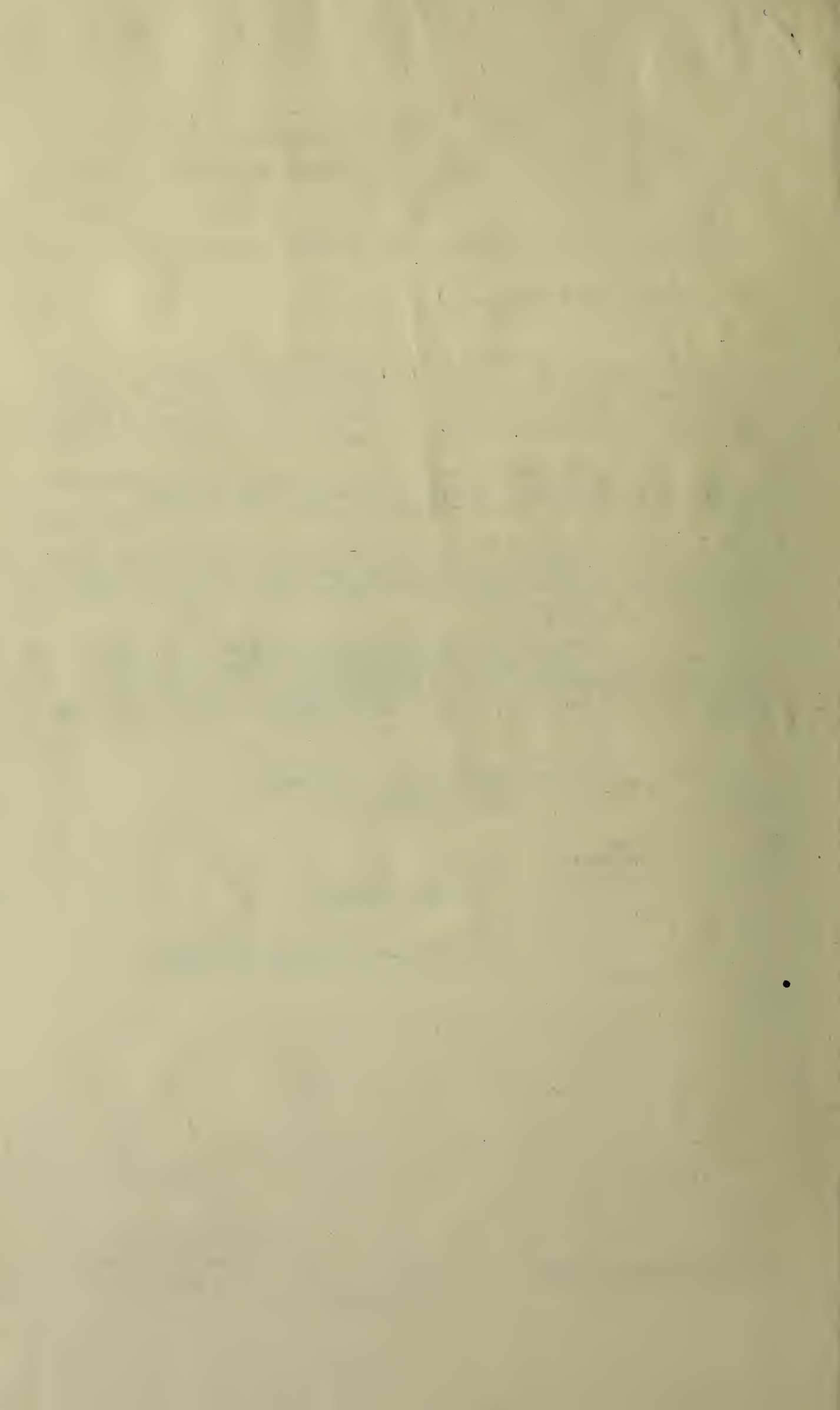
I am,  
Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,  
Yours faithfully,

John G. Walker.

Medical Officer of Health.

25th. September, 1945.

Health Department,  
Council Offices,  
LEADGATE.



CONSETT URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Interim Report of the Medical Officer of Health  
for Year ending December 31st. 1944.

Summary of General & Vital Statistics.

Area in Acres	9,840
Population (Census 1931)	38,046
Population (mid-year 1944)	35,050
Number of Inhabited Houses according to rate books	10,206
Unreduced Rateable Value	£ 197,444
Reduced Rateable Value	£ 158,767
Sum Represented by a ld. Rate	£ 591
Births during the year	732
Birthrate	20.8
Deaths during the year	434
Crude deathrate	12.0
Infantile Mortality Rate	43.0
Tuberculosis deathrate	0.79
Pulmonary Tuberculosis deathrate	0.51
Non-pulmonary Tuberculosis deathrate	0.28
Zymotic deathrate	Nil

Special Causes of Sickness.

There were no special causes of sickness during the year.

Extracts from Vital Statistics.

		Total	M.	F.	
Live Births	(Legitimate	695	361	334 )	Birthrate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population 20.8
	(Illegitimate	37	16	21 )	
	Totals	732	377	355	

Total Live Births )  
Legitimate & Illegitimate } 732

Still Births	(Legitimate	30	11	19)	Rate per 1,000 total (Live & Still) births 40.6
	(Illegitimate	1	1	-)	
	Total	31	12	19	

Deaths from all Causes 434 223 211) Deathrate per 1,000 of  
estimated resident  
population 12.0

Deaths from Puerperal  
Causes

No. 29	Puerperal Sepsis	0 )	Rate per 1,000 total (Live & Still) Births 1.3
No. 30	Other Puerperal	)	
	Causes	2 )	

Deathrate of infants under one year of age:-

All Infants per 1,000 live births	43.0
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births	46.0
Illegitimate " " " illegitimate " "	Nil
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	47
" " Measles	Nil
" " Whooping Cough	Nil
" " Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	Nil

Population estimated by the Registrar General (1944) 35,050





# Causes of Death in Consett Urban District 1944.

## Causes of Death.

Males Females

All Causes:-	223	211
1. Typhoid and para-typhoid fevers	-	-
2. Corebro-spinal fever	-	-
3. Scarlet Fever	-	-
4. Whooping Cough	-	-
5. Diphtheria	-	-
6. Tuberculosis of respiratory system	8	10
7. Other forms of Tuberculosis	4	6
8. Syphilitic Diseases	-	-
9. Influenza	5	2
10. Measles	-	-
11. Acute Polio-myelitis & Polio-encephalitis	-	-
12. Acute Infantile Encephalitis	-	-
13. Cancer of Buccal cavity)	2	-
"    "    Uterus    )	-	4
14.    "    "    Stomach & Duodenum	12	3
15.    "    "    Breast	-	5
16.    "    "    all other sites	12	9
17. Diabetes	3	4
18. Inter-cranial vasular lesions	26	35
19. Heart Disease	54	51
20. Other diseases of Circulatory System	4	3
21. Bronchitis	12	4
22. Pneumonia	14	9
23. Other Respiratory Diseases	3	4
24. Ulcer of Stomach or Duodenum	4	1
25. Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	-	-
26. Appendicitis	-	-
27. Other Digestive Diseases	2	3
28. Nephritis	12	5
29. Puerperal & Post-abortion Sepsis	-	-
30. Other Maternal Causes	-	2
31. Premature Birth	3	3
32. Congenital Malformity, Birth Injuries etc.	6	6
33. Suicide	-	-
34. Road Traffic Accidents	-	2
35. Other Violent Causes	6	1
36. All Other Causes	31	39

## Deaths from the Principal Infectious Diseases.

It is especially pleasing to report that there were no deaths from measles, whooping cough, diarrhoea (under 2 years), smallpox, scarlet fever, diphtheria, fever (enteric, typhus etc), in your district during 1944. A nil Zymotic deathrate which is a new record.



Zymotic Deathrate per 1,000 population	0.00
" " for the Administrative County	0.21

The rate is nil. The rate (0.4) last year was one of the lowest recorded.

### Infant Mortality Rate.

There were 32 deaths of infants under one year of age compared with 28 last year, which gives an infant mortality rate of 43.7, the lowest on record. This improves on last year's rate (46.5), which was the lowest recorded to that time.

Infant Mortality Rate	Consett Urban District	43.7
" " "	Administrative County	56.0
" " "	England & Wales	46.0
" " "	148 Towns with population 25,000 to 50,000	44.0

### General Provisions of Health Services in the Area.

Staff of the Public Health Department:-

- (a) Medical Officer of Health, John G. Walker, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

Offices and duties:- Wholetime Medical Officer of Health for the joint areas of the Consett Urban and Lanchester Rural District Councils in accordance with the Memorandum on the duties of Medical Officers of Health and the Sanitary Officers Order 1935.

- (b) Chief Sanitary Inspector:- F. Stringfellow.  
Certificate of R.S.I. for Sanitary Inspectors.  
Certificate of R.S.I. for Meat & Food Inspectors.

- (c) Additional Sanitary Inspectors:-  
H. Walton, Certificate of S.I.B. and Meat Certificate.  
W. Telford, " " " " " " "

- (d) Shops Inspector, R.P. Joze.

- (e) Clerical Staff, Clerk - Miss P.E. Barrow.  
Junior Clerk (temporary) Miss M. Martin.

- (f) Rodent Officer, W. L. Armstrong.

- (g) Home Visitors (Scabies etc) Miss E.A. Pickering, Miss R. Mawson.

### Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

#### Water Supply.

There was an ample supply of water from the services under control of the Durham County Water Board with the exception of two areas in the higher levels of the district at Medomsley and Iveston. Here there is only an intermittent supply. The Board is aware of the position and as soon as the required material is available, the necessary pressures will be provided.

Two samples were subjected to bacteriological examination with the following results:-





No. 1. Bacteriologically this is a satisfactory sample of water.

Presumptive Coliform Count.

Probable number of Coliform Bacilli present per  
100 ml. of water - Nil

No. 2. Exactly as No. 1.

A sample taken from a private supply to three cottages at Hamsterley Estate proved to be unsatisfactory and unfit for drinking purposes. The owner has agreed to provide a public water supply as labour and materials become available.

Drainage and Sewerage.

The various disposal works continue to function satisfactorily. Some lengths of sewer in the Consett and Medomsley area were relaid at various points in order to prevent flooding. Ten houses in the Ebchester area formerly discharging to cesspools etc. were connected up to the public sewers.

Closet Accommodation.

Apart from additional water closets provided in connection with new erections there was little alteration as compared with the pre-war figures. Only 5 ash closets were converted to water closets. The approximate number and various types of receptacle in use are as follows:-

Water Closets	9,875
Ash closets	602
Ashpit Privies	492

Public Cleansing.

This work is carried out under the control of the Surveyor. No alterations in method have been made during the year and complaints are rarely received. Considerable time has been devoted to salvage work and figures of tonnage etc. for the various materials collected have compared quite favourably with other parts of the County.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area.

The following table sets out details of work done under various headings during 1944:-

		Informal Notices	Formal Notices	Nuisances abated after Notice
Dwelling)	Foul Conditions	6		6
houses )	Structural Defects	247	9	138
)	Overcrowding	11		7
Cowsheds		8		8
Slaughterhouses		2		2
Ashpits and Privies		42		40
Deposits of Refuse or Manure		2		2
Water Closets		13	1	11
Drainage Faults		67	1	64
Water Supply		5		4
Animals improperly Kept		2		2
Other Nuisances		4		4
Totals		409	11	288



## Precautions against Infectious Diseases.

Houses visited following infectious disease and disinfectants etc. supplied	58
Lots of infectious bedding stove or destroyed	1
Schools disinfected	Nil

### Factories Act 1937.

During the year a total of fiftyseven inspections were made of factories in various parts of the area.

### Shops Act 1934.

Sixty visits were made to shops and in 4 cases defects needing attention were remedied:-

Blocked drainage to W.C.	1
Drainage reconstructed and chamber provided	1
Water closet compartments rebuilt	2

### Schools.

No schools were closed on account of infectious disease.

### Housing.

The demand for houses is very great and considerable time is spent in interviewing people who have no separate housing accommodation. The closing or demolition of houses has been avoided so far as possible, except in extreme cases where the conditions are so bad that some action is essential in the interests of the occupiers. Unfortunately, the repair of properties remains a very difficult problem on account of the shortage of labour and material.

### Unfit Houses.

Number of separate tenements in respect of which closing orders were made	1
Number of houses in respect of which Demolition orders were made	Nil
Number of dwelling houses in respect of which the owners have given undertakings not to use the houses for human habitation	Nil
Number of houses actually demolished	34
Number of separate tenements in respect of which closing orders were determined, the tenement or rooms having been rendered fit	Nil

The 34 houses demolished were properties dealt with pre-war as "Individually Unfit" or included in Clearance Areas. There remain 48 houses yet to be cleared, the great majority being in ruinous condition.

### Overcrowding.

From inspections made in various parts of the area it is clear that many houses unsuitable for the purpose are occupied by members of more than one family. Seven actual cases of overcrowding were abated as follows:-





By removal to houses controlled by Housing Association	3
" " " " " the Council	1
" " " " " privately	1
By reduction of family	2

### Milk Supply.

Below are set out particulars of registration and licences issued under the Milk & Dairies Order 1926 and the Milk Designation Order 1936.

Cowkeepers	56
Farms registered as Dairies	56
Other Registered Dairies	26
Wholesale Producers only	19
Retail Purveyors in the area	63
Retail Purveyors from other areas	14
Producers of Accredited Milk	20
Producers of Tuberculin Tested Milk	2

Altogether, 197 visits were made to premises concerned with the production and distribution of milk. Two producers were licensed during the year to sell "Accredited" milk and one producer attained the "Tuberculin Tested" standard. A new byre was erected at Todd Hills Farm, Moorside, together with a dairy, sterilizing plant etc., and the public water was provided to replace an unsatisfactory local supply. A new dairy was built at Rock Cottage, Iveston, to replace a defective wooden erection formerly in use. In February, monthly sampling of milk was put into operation in the area under the National Milk Testing and Advisory Scheme. Samples are taken from all retail purveyors in the area and similarly from wholesalers at the reception depots. We co-operated with the Sampling Officer in our own area from the inception of the scheme and until the Officer became familiar with the various points to be visited.

### Meat and other Foods.

The two slaughter houses under Government Control continued to operate during the year for the provision of home killed meat for distribution in the Consett Urban and Lanchester Rural areas. Details of the various animals slaughtered are as follows:-

Bulls	60
Bullocks	385
Cows	555
Heifers	927
Calves	622
Pigs	60
Sheep	<u>7,207</u>
Total	<u>9,816</u>

In addition, 395 animals were brought in for slaughter as casualties, including 15 cows directed by the Ministry of Agriculture's Veterinary Officers under the Tuberculosis Order 1938:-





Bulls	9
Bullocks	22
Cows	157
Heifers	29
Calves	37
Pigs	35
Sheep	<u>106</u>
Total	395

The attached printed sheet gives particulars of animal carcasses and organs found to be diseased or otherwise unfit for human consumption.

Imported Meat. Following is a list of imported meat distributed to the trade during the year:-

Quarters of Beef	3,548
Sheep & Lambs	19,596
Mutton Legs (Pairs)	673
Cases Pork Loins	2,193
Bags Boneless Pork	1,378
Hog Sides	1,087
Pork Cuts	1,247
Veal Sides	354

588 lbs. frozen mutton was found to be unsound and unmarketable on account of black spot mould.

Private Slaughtering. 58 pigs were examined in various parts of the area following slaughter on behalf of private individuals.

Other Foods. Fish, fruit, vegetables and provisions etc. found to be unsound at retail shops and other depots:-

Tinned Goods.

234	tins	Meat
126	"	Fish
111	"	Vegetables
88	"	Milk
84	"	Apricot Pulp
58	"	Jam
21	"	Soup
4	"	Fruit
2	"	Chocolate

Fish.

6½	stones	Whittings
2	"	Haddocks

Various Foods.

337	Fishcakes
133	Eggs
44	lbs. Sausage
25	" Biscuits

Bottled Goods.

55	Bottles	Horse Radish Sauce
20	Jars	Jam
8	"	Pickles

Food & Drugs Act 1938.

During the year 163 inspections were made of premises where foodstuffs are prepared and which are registered under the above Act. In a number of cases defects were remedied following verbal notice.



CONSETT URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Total Carcasses, etc., found to be unfit for human consumption during the year 1944

	CARCASSES ETC.				LUNGS			OX HEARTS			LIVERS			HEADS		PLUCKS		COWS UDDERS	Ox Stomachs and Intestines
	Beasts	Calves	Sheep	Pigs	Ox	Sheep	Pigs	Ox	Sheep	Pigs	Ox	Sheep	Pigs	Ox	Pigs	Sheep	Pigs		
Tuberculosis .....	64+ 8Qrs. + 373lbs.	1	1	2	421		1	21	33		139			8				6	53
Johnes Disease .....	8																		2
Actinomycosis .....											6								
Pericarditis (Septic) .....	2																		
Pyæmia .....			1																
Pneumonia .....					2														
Pleurisy & Peritonitis .....	2		1																
Cirrhosis .....									211	1									
Swine Erysipelas .....				1														131	
Mastitis .....																			
Septic Conditions .....	19 + 22lbs.	4	6																
C. Haemangioma .....									2										
Oedema and/or Emaciation .....	2		9	1															
Parasites .....									1	11					7				
Dead, Moribund, Imperfect Bleeding, Congestion etc. ....	1	1	4						8						10				
Immaturity .....		2																	
Decomposition .....	1		1																
Traumatism .....	343lbs.	76lbs.	12lbs.	115lbs.															
Melanosis .....		1																	
TOTALS .....	99+ 8qrs.+ 738lbs.	9+ 76lbs.	23+ 12lbs.	4+ 115lbs.	423		1	21	255	11	1			145	8	17		137	55





## Rats and Mice Destruction.

Under the Infestation Order 1943 the Ministry of Food issued directions in March 1944 asking the Council to proceed to remedy infestation by rats in sewers, drains and culverts administered by the Council. Any Sewage Disposal Works connected with sewers, drains or culverts and administered by the Council to be simultaneously treated for the destruction of rats

A detailed survey of all manholes in the area was made and plans prepared showing the position and depth of each manhole. In May the sewer campaign was started. The whole area was dealt with, including the four Sewage Disposal Works. At the first treatment sausage rusk was used as a prebait and zinc phosphide as a poison. After an interval of about a month a second treatment was carried out, this time with bread mash as prebait and barium carbonate as the poison. Judging from the amount of poison baits taken, the results appeared to be highly successful.

## Prevalence of and Control over Infectious and Other Diseases.

There were 484 notifications of infectious diseases (other than tuberculosis) compared with 543 in 1943. Measles and whooping cough were again prevalent and accounted for 371 cases of the 484. Compared with the total of 1,586 notifications in 1940, we can be satisfied with such low returns in the sixth year of war. The following table shows the number of cases notified and the numbers admitted either to isolation hospitals or already in an institution:-

Disease.	Number of Notifications	Number admitted to Hospital
Scarlet Fever	15	11
Diphtheria	33	33
Erysipelas	15	2
Puerperal Pyrexia	1	-
Pneumonia	48	3
Measles	306	-
Whooping Cough	65	-
Acute Polio-myelitis	1	1
Totals	484	50

Non-civilian cases are not included in these figures.

Scarlet Fever. There was a decline in cases compared with 1943, 15 cases against 62. The type of disease was mild and generally free from complications. There were no deaths. About 25% of the cases were successfully treated at home with no ill effects and "return" cases were absent.

Diphtheria. There were 33 cases notified during 1944, 6 of which were non-residents. Of the 27 residents contracting this disease--

3 were over 15 years of age  
20 " " 5 and under 15 years of age  
4 " under 5 years of age

In the 5 - 15 group 3 were immunised 17 were non-immunised  
" " under 5 " 1 was " 3 " " "



There were no deaths from this disease during 1944, which establishes another record for your district. The following table gives the cases notified and the number of deaths annually since 1927 in the area now constituting Consett Urban District. Figures for the years prior to 1937 are composite figures based on those of the separate areas as far as records permit:-

Year	Cases Notified (Resident population)	Deaths
1927	95	9
1928	129	11
1929	140	6
1930	141	5
1931	49	2
1932	60	2
1933	183	11
1934	234	16
1935	150	15
1936	164	16
1937	180	15
1938	154	14
1939	73	11
1940	10	3
1941	10	1
1942	13	2
1943	22	2
1944	27	0

Diphtheria Immunisation Campaign. The results of the measures taken have been satisfactory. The adjusted figures at the end of 1944 were:-

Children	under 5 years	receiving 2 doses of A.P.T.	= 46%
"	5 - 15	" " " " " "	= 76.7%

that is 66.5% of all children under 15 years of age in your area.

Scabies. The scheme for the treatment of scabies first commenced in June 1942 and some difficulties were experienced. It is now accepted without question as part of the normal public health service, and little or no opposition is met with from those concerned. There were 475 cases, involving 169 families dealt with during 1944, a slight increase on the figures for 1943. There were 47 cases of reinfestation among these cases and 1,042 visits were made to the families concerned.

Tuberculosis. The number of new notifications during 1944 was 77. The position is shown in the following table, which gives the notifications etc. since 1938:-





Year	Total Notif- icat- ions	Pulmonary	Non- Pulmonary	Deaths	Recovered	Removed from Area
1938	49	23	26	27	13	6
1939	49	35	14	23	-	4
1940	39	25	14	13	10	6
1941	39	26	13	18	10	7
1942	39	17	22	12	4	7
1943	43	31	12	24	3	8
1944	77	45	32	18	5	4
Totals	335	202	133	135	45	42

The state of the register at the beginning of 1938 was 99 pulmonary and 85 non-pulmonary cases, at the end of 1944 the corresponding figures were 161 and 138.

The housing of tubercular families has received considerable attention in your district for many years, and whilst war conditions have slowed up the process of rehousing, owing to the cessation of building, a number of families in bad circumstances have been dealt with and the Housing Department provided with a list of suitable cases for rehousing as circumstances permit. Six families were so dealt with in 1944.

Health Education. The Journal "Better Health" together with a local inset was circulated during the year to Youth Movements, Schools etc., throughout the district with useful results judging by appreciations received. Your Medical Officer of Health addressed various meetings on health topics as occasion warranted, particular attention being paid to the subject of Venereal Diseases.



